(b) if so, whether concessional tariff rates of telephone Department on STD/ISD calling cards are provided ;

(c) if so, whether Government are aware that on Sundays and Holidays when the services are provided at discounted low rates, 'Busy' recorded message is played; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to ensure that sufficient technical infrastructure should be created to manage the services during the period when the charges are lower than normal tariff rates ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) No such message is played, as the junctions are dimensioned on the basis of expected peak traffic.

Commemorative Stamp in the name of Shri P.S. Varier

3888. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal for the release of a commemorative stamp in the name of Shri P.S. Varier, the founder of Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala is pending before Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, the commemorative stamp will be released since 2002 is the centenary year of the foundation of this world famous Ayurvedic Institution ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A proposal has been received for release of a commemorative postage stamp on Shri P.S. Varier during the centenary celebrations of Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala in 2002.

(c) The proposal is being placed before the Philatelic Advisory Committee for consideration.

Complete Erosion of Government Equity

3889. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN :

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that around 87 public sector undertakings have accumulated a loss of about Rs. 37,970 crores and this has resulted in complete erosion of Government equity;

(b) if so, how Government proposes to recover the loans amounting to about Rs. 9467 crores given to these PSUs;

(c) whether BIFR has suggested a revival package for such companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL):

(a) As per report of the C&AG of India [Report 1 of 2001 (PSUs)], an investment of Rs. 6162.92 crores in the equity capital of 87 companies under 19 Ministries/Departments has been completely eroded as on 31.3.2000 as a result of losses acccumulated by these companies.

(b) Recovery of loans is a continuing process.

(c) and (d) Of these 87 compaines, 58 have been referred to the BIFR. Out of these companies referred to BIFR, revival package had been approved by the BIFR in case of 18 companies. Of these, action for revival as recommended by BIFR has been initiated in 12 companies.

Crisis of Financial Sector

3890. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Financial Sector in a crisis of confidence" which appeared in the Business Standard dated the 23rd June, 2001; and

(b) if so, what steps are proposed to be taken to address the problems highlighted in the newsreport ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL):

(a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Financial Scams

†3891. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' :

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that many financial scams have come to light during the last years from 1998-99 to March, 2001;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.